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THE DIRECTV GROUP, INC.
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DEC 1, 2007

OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of	:	
John Border et al.	:	
Application No. 09/662,072	:	DECISION ON PETITION
Filed: September 14, 2000	:	UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.181
Attorney Docket No.: PD-200053	:	
Title: PERFORMANCE ENHANCING	:	
PROXY AND METHOD FOR ENHANCING	:	
PERFORMANCE	:	

This is a decision on the petition filed on July 30, 2007, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.181, requesting that the holding of abandonment in the above-identified application be withdrawn.

BACKGROUND

The above-identified application became abandoned for failure to file a proper response to the Restriction Requirement, mailed June 22, 2005, which set a shortened statutory period to reply for one month. No extensions of time under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) were received. Accordingly, the above-identified application became abandoned on July 23, 2005. A Notice of abandonment was mailed on April 9, 2007.

RELEVANT PORTIONS OF THE C.F.R. AND MPEP

37 C.F.R. §§ 1.33(a)(2) and (b) set forth, *in toto*:

(a)(2) Where a § 1.63 oath or declaration has been filed by any of the inventors. If a § 1.63 oath or declaration has been filed, or is filed concurrent with the filing of an application, by any of the inventors, the correspondence address may be changed by the parties set forth in paragraph (b) of this section, except for paragraph (b)(2).

(b) Amendments and other papers. Amendments and other papers, except for written assertions pursuant to § 1.27(c)(2)(ii) of this part, filed in the application must be signed by:

- (1) A patent practitioner of record appointed in compliance with § 1.32(b);
- (2) A patent practitioner not of record who acts in a representative capacity under the provisions of § 1.34;
- (3) An assignee as provided for under § 3.71(b) of this chapter; or
- (4) All of the applicants (§ 1.41(b)) for patent, unless there is an assignee of the entire interest and such assignee has taken action in the application in accordance with § 3.71 of this chapter.

MPEP § 601.03 states, in pertinent part:

Where an attorney or agent of record (or applicant, if he or she is prosecuting the application pro se) changes his or her correspondence address, he or she is responsible for promptly notifying the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office of the new correspondence address (including ZIP Code). See 37 CFR 11.11. The notification should also include his or her telephone number. A change of correspondence address may not be signed by an attorney or agent not of record (see MPEP § 405).

MPEP § 711.03(c) states, in pertinent part:

PETITION TO WITHDRAW HOLDING OF ABANDONMENT BASED ON FAILURE TO RECEIVE OFFICE ACTION

In *Delgar v. Schulyer*, 172 USPQ 513 (D.D.C. 1971), the court decided that the Office should mail a new Notice of Allowance in view of the evidence presented in support of the contention that the applicant's representative did not receive the original Notice of Allowance. Under the reasoning of *Delgar*, an allegation that an Office action was never received may be considered in a petition to withdraw the holding of abandonment. If adequately supported, the Office may grant the petition to withdraw the holding of abandonment and remail the Office action. That is, the reasoning of *Delgar* is applicable regardless of whether an application is held abandoned for failure to timely pay the issue fee (35 U.S.C. 151) or for failure to prosecute (35 U.S.C. 133).

To minimize costs and burdens to practitioners and the Office, the Office has modified the showing required to establish nonreceipt of an Office action. The showing required to establish nonreceipt of an Office communication must include a statement from the practitioner stating that the Office communication was not received by the practitioner and attesting to the fact that a search of the file jacket and docket records indicates that the Office communication was not received. A copy of the docket record where the nonreceived Office communication would have been entered had it been received and docketed must be attached to and referenced in practitioner's statement. For example, if a three month period for reply was set in the nonreceived Office action, a copy of the docket report showing all replies docketed for a date three months from the mail date of the nonreceived Office action must be submitted as documentary proof of nonreceipt of the Office action. See Notice entitled "Withdrawing the Holding of Abandonment When Office Actions Are Not Received," 1156 O.G. 53 (November 16, 1993).

The showing outlined above may not be sufficient if there are circumstances that point to a conclusion that the Office action may have been lost after receipt rather than a conclusion that the Office

action was lost in the mail (e.g., if the practitioner has a history of not receiving Office actions).

Evidence of nonreceipt of an Office communication or action (e.g., Notice of Abandonment or an advisory action) other than that action to which reply was required to avoid abandonment would not warrant withdrawal of the holding of abandonment. Abandonment takes place by operation of law for failure to reply to an Office action or timely pay the issue fee, not by operation of the mailing of a Notice of Abandonment. See *Lorenz v. Finkl*, 333 F.2d 885, 889-90, 142 USPQ 26, 29-30 (CCPA 1964); *Krahn v. Commissioner*, 15 USPQ2d 1823, 1824 (E.D. Va 1990); *In re Application of Fischer*, 6 USPQ2d 1573, 1574 (Comm'r Pat. 1988).

Two additional procedures are available for reviving an application that has become abandoned due to a failure to reply to an Office Action: (1) a petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a) based upon unavoidable delay; and (2) a petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b) based on unintentional delay.

ANALYSIS

It is noted in passing that that on May 1, 2007, a registered practitioner by the name of Mark Pratt submitted a Change of Correspondence Address, requesting that the address that is associated with the present application be changed to the address that is associated with Customer Number 29,158, which is presently Bell, Boyd & Lloyd LLP, P.O. Box 1135, Chicago, IL, 60690. This change of correspondence address was not entered, as Mr. Pratt is not one of the attorneys of record¹.

With the present petition, Petitioner has asserted that the Office communication was not received, has attested to the fact that a search of the file jacket and docket records indicates that the Office communication was not received, and has provided a copy of the docket record where the nonreceived Office communication would have been entered had it been received and docketed.

However, the restriction requirement was mailed to the address of record: The DirecTV Group, Inc., Patent Docket Administration, CA / LA1 / A109, P O Box 956, El Segundo Ca 90245-0956. The address that appears on the present petition is Phouphanomketh Dithavong, 918 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA, 22314.

It appears that Petitioner did not receive the relevant communication because it was not mailed to him. The restriction requirement was properly mailed not to Petitioner in Virginia, but rather to the correspondence address of record in California.

As such, the petition must be **DISMISSED**.

¹ See 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.133(a)(2) and MPEP § 601.03.

Any reply must be submitted within **TWO MONTHS** from the mail date of this decision. Extensions of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) are permitted. The reply should include a cover letter entitled "Renewed Petition Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.181(a)." This is not a final agency action within the meaning of 5 U.S.C § 704.

The renewed petition should indicate in a prominent manner that the attorney handling this matter is Paul Shanoski, and may be submitted by mail², hand-delivery³, or facsimile⁴. Registered users of EFS-Web may alternatively submit a response to this decision via EFS-Web⁵.

Alternatively, Petitioner may wish to consider filing a petition under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.137(a) and/or (b).

It is noted that the address listed on the petition differs from the address of record. The application file does not indicate a change of correspondence address has been filed in this case, although the address given on the petition differs from the address of record. If Petitioner desires to receive future correspondence regarding this application, the change of correspondence address must be submitted. A courtesy copy of this decision will be mailed to Petitioner. However, all future correspondence will be directed to the address of record until such time as appropriate instructions are received to the contrary. Petitioner will not receive future correspondence related to this application unless Change of Correspondence Address, Patent Form (PTO/SB/122) is submitted for the above-identified application. For Petitioner's convenience, a blank Change of Correspondence Address, Patent Form (PTO/SB/122), may be found at <http://www.uspto.gov/web/forms/sb0122.pdf>.

It is not apparent whether the person signing the statement of unintentional delay was in a position to have firsthand or direct knowledge of the facts and circumstances of the delay at issue. Nevertheless, such statement is being treated as having been made as the result of a reasonable inquiry into the facts and circumstances of such delay⁶. In the event that such an inquiry has not been made, Petitioner's representative must make

2 Mail Stop Petition, Commissioner for Patents, United States Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA, 22313-1450.

3 Customer Window, Randolph Building, 401 Dulane Street, Alexandria, VA, 22314.

4 (571) 273-8300- please note this is a central facsimile number.

5 <https://sportal.uspto.gov/authenticate/authenticateuserlocalepf.html>

6 See 37 CFR 10.18(b); cf. Changes to Patent Practice and Procedure; Final Rule Notice, 62 Fed. Reg. 53131, 53178 (October 10, 1997), 1203 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 63, 103 (October 21, 1997).

such an inquiry. If such inquiry results in the discovery that the delay was intentional, Petitioner's representative must notify the Office.

Telephone inquiries regarding *this decision* should be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3225'. All other inquiries concerning examination procedures or status of the application should be directed to the Technology Center.



Paul Shanoski
Senior Attorney
Office of Petitions
United States Patent and Trademark Office

cc: Phouphanomketh Ditthavong
918 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

7 Petitioner will note that all practice before the Office should be in writing, and the action of the Office will be based exclusively on the written record in the Office. See 37 C.F.R. § 1.2. As such, Petitioner is reminded that no telephone discussion may be controlling or considered authority for Petitioner's further action(s).